



Shanghai Consulate News for Americans

Issue 53

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American Citizen Services (ACS) Contact Information

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A July 4th Voting Reminder

Happy 4th of July! U.S. citizens around the globe will soon mark the 236th anniversary of our Nation's Independence Day with family and community gatherings, food, and fireworks. For U.S. citizens living outside the United States, the 4th of July is an opportunity for all of us, regardless of political affiliation, to celebrate our shared values as citizens of the United States of America.

Have a say in our country's future. One of our most treasured values is the right and the privilege to vote – to participate actively in our country's democratic process. This November, U.S. citizens will elect a President, a Vice President, one-third of the Senate, and the entire House of Representatives. The Shanghai Consulate encourages all U.S. citizens to participate in this year's elections, and stands ready to help you vote.

Almost all overseas U.S. citizens can vote. Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia now allow adult children who have never resided in the United States to vote using their parents' state of voting residence. Details are available on the FVAP website at <http://www.fvap.gov/reference/nvr-res.html>.

Register and request a ballot. To vote, new laws require you to complete and submit a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) this calendar year. The FPCA allows you to register to vote and request an absentee ballot. If you haven't yet done so, we urge you to do so now. The easiest way to complete it is online at www.FVAP.gov. Depending on your State's rules, you then send it to your local election officials electronically or by mail.

Mailing guidance. Print out the completed FPCA and the (U.S.) postage-paid envelope containing the address of your local election officials. You can drop off the postage-paid envelope (containing your FPCA) at the Consulate, and we will mail it back home for you without the need to

pay international postage. If it's easier for you to use China's postal system, be sure to affix sufficient international postage and allow sufficient time for international mail delivery.

Need help? NOTE: It is acceptable for private U.S. citizens or U.S. citizens' groups to collect FPCAs and deliver them to the Consulate on behalf of other eligible voters, as long as each FPCA is in its own U.S. postage-paid envelope.

Make your vote count! Follow your State's absentee voting procedures carefully. Send in your FPCA before the registration deadline. When you get your ballot, vote and mail it promptly so it reaches local election officials by your State's absentee ballot receipt deadline.

Questions? If you have any questions about registering to vote, please contact Shanghai's Voting Assistance Officer at 86-21-3217-4650, or at VoteShanghai@state.gov.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: New absentee voting laws are in effect for the 2012 elections. You may no longer automatically receive ballots based on a previous absentee ballot request. All U.S. citizens outside the United States who want to vote by absentee ballot in U.S. elections should complete a new Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) every year. States are now required to send out ballots 45 days before an election. No matter what State you vote in, you can now ask your local election officials to provide your blank ballots to you electronically (by email, internet download, or fax, depending on your State). You can now also confirm your registration and ballot delivery online. Be sure to include your email address on the form to take advantage of the electronic ballot delivery option. This is the fastest and most reliable way to receive your ballot on time, and we strongly recommend every voter take advantage of it. Learn more at the Federal Voting Assistance Program's (FVAP) website at www.FVAP.gov.

Upcoming Holidays & Other Closures

A full list of all of our holiday closings is online at <http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/holidays.html>. The ACS Unit will be **CLOSED** to the public on:

July 4, Wednesday:

Independence Day

(独立日 Dúlì Rì)

Air Quality Monitor at U.S. Consulate Shanghai

The U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai has recently installed a PM2.5 air quality monitor to measure fine particles in the air at its Huai Hai Middle Road compound.

Data from this monitor are used to calculate the Air Quality Index (AQI)

which provides a health resource for the American community.

If you would like to view our data, please look for us on Twitter (@cgshanghaiair) or view our website at <http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/airmonitor.html>.



Leaving Shanghai Consular District?

If you are departing the Shanghai consular district after a long stay here and you formally joined the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP), please do not forget to end your enrollment when you leave.

You can end your enrollment by visiting the <https://travelregistration.state.gov> site if you previously enrolled through this site.

If you previously submitted a paper enrollment form to the U.S. consulate, you may end your enrollment by sending an email request to:

ShanghaiACS@state.gov.

Travel Warnings and Alerts

Security reminder: It is advisable that you and your family review your personal security profile and be aware of your surroundings at all times.

Since our previous Newsletter, the U.S. Department of State has issued new Travel Warnings for the following countries:

<u>Nigeria</u>	06/21/2012
<u>Haiti</u>	06/18/2012
<u>Somalia</u>	06/15/2012
<u>Philippines</u>	06/14/2012
<u>Mauritania</u>	05/24/2012

Travel Warnings are issued to describe long-term, protracted conditions that make a country dangerous or unstable. A Travel Warning is also issued when the U.S. Government's ability to assist American citizens is constrained due to the closure of an embassy or consulate or because of a

drawdown of its staff. This information is available at http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html.

The U.S. Department of State also has issued new Travel Alerts:

Hurricane Typhoon Season 2012 06/04/2012

Travel Alerts are issued to disseminate information about short-term conditions generally within a particular country or region that pose imminent risks to the security of U.S. citizens. Natural disasters, terrorist attacks, coups, anniversaries of terrorist events, election-related demonstrations or violence, and high-profile events such as international conferences or regional sports events are examples of conditions that might generate a Travel Alert. This information is available at :

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_t

[w/pa/pa_1766.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_t).

The most up-to-date information regarding permitted and prohibited items on flights can be viewed online at www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/prohibited/permitted-prohibited-items.shtm.

For additional information, please visit "Americans Traveling Abroad" on the U.S. Department of State website: http://travel.state.gov/visa/americans/americans_1252.html.

Students traveling abroad may wish to visit the State Department site designed for them: <http://studentsabroad.state.gov/>.

To obtain up-to-date information on security conditions, please call 1-888-407-4747 (toll free in the United States), or +1-202-501-4444 if you are outside the United States.

Children - Child Traveling with One Parent or Someone Who Is Not A Parent or Legal Guardian or A Group

(From cbp.gov)

If a child (under the age of 18) is traveling with only one parent or someone who is not a parent or legal guardian, what paperwork should the adult have to indicate permission or legal authority to have that child in their care?

Due to the increasing incidents of child abductions in disputed custody cases and as possible victims of child pornography, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) strongly recommends that unless the child is accompanied by both parents, the adult have a note from the child's other parent (or, in the case of a child traveling with grandparents, uncles or aunts, sisters or brothers, friends, or in groups*, a note signed by both parents) stating:

"I acknowledge that my wife/husband/etc. is traveling out of the country with my son/daughter/group. He/She/They has/have my permission to do so."

CBP also suggests that this note be notarized.

Parental consent/permission letter

What should a parental consent/permission letter look like? Is there a Customs and Border Protection (CBP) form?

There is not a CBP Form letter, however, the parental consent letter should include: Who, What, Where, When, Why, and contact information for the absent parent(s).

Having the letter notarized is not necessary but highly recommended. For frequent border crossers, the letter should not exceed one year. It is recommended to have the letter in English.

While CBP may not ask to see this documentation, if they do ask, and you do not have it, you may be detained until the circumstances of the child traveling without both parents can be fully assessed. If there is no second parent with legal claims to the child

(deceased, sole custody, etc.) any other relevant paperwork, such as a court decision, birth certificate naming only one parent, death certificate, etc., would be useful.

Adults traveling with children should also be aware that, while the U.S. does not require this documentation, many other countries do; failure to produce notarized permission letters and/or birth certificates could result in travelers being refused entry (Canada has very strict requirements in this regard).

* School groups, teen tours, vacation groups.



A Safety Reminder

American Citizens are reminded to be cautious of confidence schemes, usually operated by Chinese nationals who will approach foreigners in tourist areas. Usually these schemes will involve an invitation to a secondary location, either for a social visit (viewing a tea ceremony, "practicing English,") or for seemingly low-priced massages. At the conclusion of the ceremony or service, the forcing citizen will then be presented with a bill much higher than reasonable or anticipated, or for services not requested or rendered. Intimidation,

threats of physical violence or additional charges are not unusual in situations where the foreign citizen refused to pay immediately. If forced to pay, American Citizens should call the police and the credit-card company as soon as possible to report the crime.

Some General Safety Advice:

- Shanghai is a big city with big city problems.
- It is not a good idea at home; it is probably not a good idea here.

- If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.
- Always be aware of your surroundings. Look at the people close to **you and watch out for "accidental"** nudging and touching.
- Think about leaving valuable and extra cash behind in a safe place when you go out.
- **Don't carry all your valuable, cash, credit cards, etc in one pocket or bag – distribute.**
- Enter into your phone: 110 (police) and 962288 (bilingual assistance).

Local News: City Easing Path to Work Permits for Foreigners

(From Shanghai Daily, June 2, 2012, By Dong Zhen)

THE city plans to open service centers at district levels to help save legwork and queuing time for foreigners who need to apply for work permits to become legally employed in Shanghai.

The downtown Huangpu District's Employment Promotion Center yesterday started accepting work permit applications of foreign residents. One window at the center is now open for the foreign applicants

The service will accept foreign applicants whose employers are registered or located inside Huangpu District. This means they can avoid traveling to the only city-level center to go through the procedures.

The district offices usually have fewer customers and applicants can expect shortened wait times compared to the city-level center, an official surnamed Ding with the Shanghai Human Resources and Social Security Bureau said yesterday.

"The scheme is to help divert traffic from the city-level center and offer bettered convenience for the foreign applicants. They can just find their nearest district center to complete the application steps," Ding said.

Officials said the same convenience will be offered soon by employment offices in the Pudong New Area and Xuhui, Jing'an, Minhang and Jiading districts.

The Huangpu District center is at 525 Nanchezhan Road. It can be reached by Metro lines 4 and 8 as well as No. 929, 66 and 771 buses.

People from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao applying for work permits are covered by the same application rules and can use the same service offices.

The city-level office, Shanghai Administrative Center for Employment of Foreigners, is at 77 Meiyuan Road in Zhaobei District. The human resources hotline 12333 offers consultations.

Local News: Police Want Action Against Phone 'Spoofing' Scams

(From Shanghai Daily, June 14, 2012, By Ni Yinbin)

SHANGHAI police are calling on telecom administrators to stop service to suspected clients who use Internet phone calls to scam residents in China.

Police said suspects take advantage of the ability to call with their number blocked or a false number shown - a practice called "spoofing" - in order to confuse victims. In a typical recent case, a woman surnamed Zhou was cheated out of 4.2 million yuan (US\$659,236) after she received a phone call with the number of a police department in Beijing.

Zhou said she got the phone call on May 4 with the number starting with 010, the regional code of Beijing, from someone who claimed to be from the economic crime investigation department of Beijing police. The caller said Zhou's social security account was overdrawn and might be involved with a money laundering case and asked Zhou to cooperate with the police investigation.

Zhou checked the caller number with 114, a yellow pages hotline, and was told that the caller's number belongs to Beijing police.

Several minutes later, the caller rang Zhou again, who by this time trusted the caller, Zhou was asked to transfer all

her money to a safe account offered by the "police." She did so, transferring all the savings of her family plus money borrowed from friends and relatives. The caller turned out to be a scammer using a function offered by the telecom operator to mimic the police telephone number, Shanghai police said. The case was still under investigation.

To attract clients, telecom operators enable clients to set the incoming number they want to be displayed on the phone of someone they call. This service can be used as a tactic by suspects, said Wei Jian, an anti-telecom scam expert of Shanghai police.

"The first step of the suspects is making calls, most of them called with servers overseas," Wei said. "This year we had eight cases with stolen money reaching over 1 million yuan and all the victims received the calls with a false number." But Wei also said the trick was not hard to see through as long as the receiver of the call dials back the number to check it.

Shanghai police said they have detained more than 270 suspects this year in hundreds of telecom scam cases and helped to stop 1,780 potential cases, keeping 91 million yuan from possibly being stolen.

Local News: July Start for Graduated Power Tariff

(From Shanghai Daily, June 15, 2012, By Richard Fu)

China is to implement a graduated power tariff mechanism for households from next month as part of government efforts to conserve energy.

All provinces and municipalities were told to implement the new system before the second half of the year with the stipulation that local plans should leave 80 percent of households unaffected, the National Development and Reform Commission, China's top economic planning body, said.

In Shanghai the new system will result in a 4 percent rise

on average in residential power prices but will not affect 80 percent of families, local authorities said. After public hearings on how the new system could operate, Shanghai is expected to announce the details of its plan today.

Most people who took part in the hearings in the city last month preferred a plan that uses one year as a calculation period. In the one-year plan, a household pays what it currently pays until consumption hits 3,120 kilowatt hours (260 kwh a month times 12), and then pays higher rates during the rest of the year.

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International Travel Tips

Leaving China on business or holiday? Here are a few tips to make your international travel smoother:

Carefully review the validity of your current U.S. passport. Regular passports are processed in Washington and are usually received within 10-20 calendar days after the application is submitted to the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. More information about the passport renewal process can be found at http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/u.s.passport_renewals.html.

Many governments require US travelers to have at least six months validity left in their passports for entry into their countries. Check our Country Specific Information Sheets to learn the Entry and Exit Requirements for your destination. These information sheets are available online at <http://travel.state.gov/>. Please keep in mind that if visas are required, you will need to visit the respective embassies of your destination countries. In addition, some visas may take several days or weeks to be processed, so plan ahead and make your visa appointments early.

Apply early if you need a new passport or additional pages in your passport, because passport services are by appointment only. Typically, only two sets of additional pages may be added to a passport; after that, you will need to replace the passport, even if it has not already expired. Also, additional pages cannot be affixed to a limited validity or a damaged passport.

Register in the STEP program. The Department of State encourages U.S. citizens living overseas or planning to travel abroad to enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs/ui>. By enrolling in

STEP, we can keep you up to date with important safety and security announcements and will also make it easier for the Embassy/Consulate to contact you in the event of an emergency. You should remember to keep all of your information in STEP up to date; it is particularly important when you enroll or update your information to include a current phone number and e-mail address.

Inform your family or friends of your travel plans. Tell those you trust about your travel plans, including your transportation, hotel, and local contact information, so that they know how to reach you in the event of an emergency. Keep a copy of your passport and China visa not in the same place you keep your passport.

You can find more information about international travel on the Department of State website at <http://travel.state.gov/>.

If you will be requiring services from the Consulate, remember that appointments fill up fast before or after the holidays, so please make sure to plan ahead. To make an appointment, visit our website at http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/appointment_system011309.html and follow the link to Citizen Services.



Shanghai Hotlines

* Police电话报警: 110	* China Telecom中国电信: 10000	Bus Hotline公交热线: 969000
Text Message to Police短信报警: 12110	* China Mobile中国移动: 10086	Subway Hotline地铁热线: 64370000
* Fire火警: 119	* China Unicom中国联通: 10010	Railway Hotline铁路热线: 95105105
* Ambulance救护: 120	* Qiang Sheng Taxi强生出租: 62580000	Medical Appointments Hotline上海助医网 声讯咨询热线: 95001120
* Lifeline英语帮助热线: 62798990 (A public-benefit, non-profit organization offering free, confidential, and anonymous information and emotional support; open 10am – 10pm, 365 days a year)	Da Zhong Taxi大众出租: 96822	Shanghai Notary Publics公证: 96987200
* Directory Assistance查询电话号: 114	Smoking Complaint 违法吸烟举报: 962727	China Post中国邮政: 11185
* Shanghai Call Center信息服务: 962288 (A 24H hotline dedicated to assist foreigners in addressing daily life inconveniences)	Telephone/IPTV Repairs电话/有线电视故障报修 112 (Emergency repairs for telephone and broadband TV (IPTV) breakdowns)	Junk SMS Report垃圾短信: 12300
* Exit-Entry Bureau出入境管理: 28951900	Cable TV Service有线电视: 96877	Consumer Rights消费者协会: 12315
* Tourist Complaints旅游: 962020	Housing Management物业: 962121	Urban Construction城建投诉: 12319 (For complaints on a wide range of transport and construction services)
Time Service报时服务: 12117	Community Services社区: 962200 (Helps people to find services such as locksmiths and shops to repair household appliances)	Food and Drug Safety食品药品安全: 12331
* Weather Report天气预报: 12121	Recycling Pickup再生资源回收交投: 962300	* Labor Department劳动保障: 12333
* Foreign Affairs Office外事办: 22161600 (Can authenticate Chinese documents to be used in the U.S.; for detailed procedures and requirements, please contact the Foreign Affairs Office directly)	Home Appliance Repairs家电维修: 962512	* Price Complaints价格举报: 12358
* Airports Flight Inquiries航班问询: 96990	* Water Supply供水热线: 962740	* Quality Complaints质量热线: 12365
	Gas Supply燃气热线: 962777	Finance and Tax Consultation财税: 12366
	Funeral Services殡葬服务: 962840	Environment Protection环保: 12369
		* Provide English Services

Local News: July Start for Graduated Power Tariff

(From Page 5)

The city has set a "basic needs" figure at 260 kilowatt hours a month, the average consumption of 80 percent of the city's 7.72 million households last year. Increased charges will kick in once consumption is beyond this figure.

Shanghai had also proposed a plan under which the basic needs figure would be raised to 350 kwh per month in July and August and in December and January when people need air-conditioning to keep cool or heating to stay warm. For the rest of the year it would be reduced to 210

kwh.

The NDRC, which sets energy prices in China, said yesterday that the basic needs figure in many provinces had been extended to leave more households unaffected. In some provinces, 90 percent of residents will see no increase in their bills.

Lin Boqiang, a Xiamen University professor, estimated that the tier-based electricity pricing would help power companies gain up to 6 billion yuan in extra revenue each year without taking into account subsidies in the form of a free electricity quota given

to poverty-stricken residents, Xinhua reported.

Progressive residential power tariffs were introduced in the US, Japan, Egypt, as well as in Hong Kong and Taiwan following the oil crisis in the 1970s. The system proved effective in curbing excessive use while ensuring the basic demands for most people were met, the commission said.

At present, Shanghai's residential power price is 0.617 yuan (about 10 US cents) per kwh, and half that figure at night.